

Virginia Emergency Operations Center
Hurricane Ophelia
Situation Report #3

Operational Period 0700 Hours September 13, 2005 to 0700 Hours September 14, 2005

SITUATION:

Hurricane Ophelia is projected to impact the Commonwealth beginning early Wednesday morning and ending as late as Thursday morning with tropical force winds and significant rainfall.

Governor Mark R. Warner declared a state of emergency within the Commonwealth on September 12, 2005, directing the Virginia Emergency Operations Center to coordinate preparedness efforts in anticipation of Hurricane Ophelia. This declaration allows state agencies to take actions specific to Hurricane Ophelia.

WEATHER:

A Tropical Storm Watch has been issued for Virginia Beach, Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Hampton, Poquoson, York and Newport News.

Ophelia appears to be moving toward the North near 5 mph. The storm is projected to continue in this slow motion over the next 24 hours. However, steering currents are forecasted to remain weak and an erratic motion is not out of the question. Ophelia is a category one hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale with maximum sustained winds near 75 mph with higher gusts. Slight strengthening is possible over the next 12 to 24 hours.

Minor coastal flooding will be possible along the Atlantic shoreline and southern Chesapeake Bay today and Thursday with a storm surge of 1 to 3 feet. Tropical Storm force winds and gusts will likely overspread areas of southeast Virginia early Thursday morning, from the southwest to the northeast for a period of approximately 12 hours.

The heaviest rainfall is expected tonight through Thursday. Coastal sections and counties in southeast Virginia could see from 1 to 3 inches of rainfall, with locally higher amounts. The rainfall could produce localized urban and street flooding.

VIRGINIA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER STATUS:

The VEOC went to Hurricane Readiness Condition 1 as of 1700 hours on September 13th.

ONGOING STATE ACTIVITIES:

- **Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM/VEOC)**
 - Monitoring the forecast of Hurricane Ophelia.
 - Fully augmented EOC and coordinating VERT response.
 - Monitoring North Carolina response activities.
 - Assessing availability of resources.
 - Communications with localities, state agencies, and other crucial response organizations emphasizing preparatory actions.

- State SAR assets were put on alert as of September 11th at 1315 hours. SAR teams in Region 5 will report their status after the storm passes. SAR teams in Region 1 are offering fallback sheltering options for those Region 5 members who may choose to evacuate.
 - PIO has handled three phone calls pertaining to Hurricane Ophelia.
 - Daily conference call with US Coast Guard.
- **Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)**
 - Reviewing hurricane preparedness checklists with emphasis on the Hampton Roads area.
- **Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (VDCR)**
 - Will begin evacuating eastern facilities.
- **Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)**
 - Monitoring Hurricane Ophelia. No evacuation of facilities anticipated.
- **Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)**
 - Despite deployment and other in-state response activities (Dismal Swamp Fire), the use of part-time personnel to augment the staff has meant that resources are deemed adequate to continue Hurricane Katrina response, fire suppression activity, and Hurricane Ophelia response if necessary.
 - Commodity staging areas are being established for quick response to projected impact areas.
 - 20-person chainsaw/labor crew deployed to Marietta, GA to the FEMA Mobilization Center. If they are not needed for Hurricane Ophelia recovery they will be deployed to assist with Hurricane Katrina.
- **Virginia Department of Health (VDH)**
 - Staff alerted and on stand-by.
- **Virginia National Guard (VNG)**
 - The Task Force Norfolk Engineering Unit deployed up to 125 guardsmen to the Norfolk Armory and the Onancock Armory to provide assistance with evacuation and debris clearing.
- **Virginia State Corporation Commission**
 - Monitoring readiness of electric co-op providers (including: Mecklenburg Electric, Southside Electric, and Community Electric.)

CONTIGUOUS STATE'S ACTIONS:

- **NC Situation:** NC EOC – NC Governor declared a State of Emergency. State EOC in Raleigh continuing 24-hour operations.

LOCAL ACTIONS:

- Monitoring Hurricane Ophelia.
- Initiating public awareness messages.
- Local Emergency has been declared by James City County.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

- Almost two dozen fighter jets from Langley Air Force Base in Virginia were sent to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida September 13 to avoid Tropical Storm Ophelia.
- Emergency Response Team – Advance (ERT-A) from FEMA Region 3 is in place.

PROJECTED FUTURE ACTIONS:

- Continue to develop Public Affairs Strategy for addressing expectations for response and recovery as part of a preparatory message.
- Re-check Stand-by Emergency Contracts and Mutual Aid Agreements for implementation.
- Revise Incident Action Plan (IAP).

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